GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2656
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2015
Impact of Mining on Wildlife
Patil Shri Bheemrao Baswanthrao

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of mining activities in the forest areas affecting the lives of the animals and birds of the forest;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the details of action taken by the Government to protect wildlife from mining activity in forest areas in the country; and
(d) if so, the details of directions issued by the Government to the States/UTs in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d) Non-forestry activities, including mining, in the forest areas affect the wildlife of the area. Use of forest areas for such activities is approved by the Central Government under Section 2 of the Forest (conservation) Act, 1980 with adequate environmental safeguards and afforestation measures in lieu of forest land proposed to be utilized for mining activities. The Central Government, since the enactment of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, has accorded approval over 12,06,320 ha of forest land in 25,879 cases for various developmental activities including mining.
The Ministry, after examination of the proposals seeking diversion of forest land, recommends need based project specific studies to assess the impact of project activity on the flora and fauna in the area proposed to be diverted under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and accordingly recommends necessary environmental safeguards as additional conditions viz. project specific Wildlife Conservation Plan, Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, additional compensatory afforestation, site specific soil conservation measures, specific studies on impact of project activities on flora and fauna, measures to facilitate wildlife movement across the roads and railway lines, detailed studies about the flora and fauna and their habitats. In addition to the aforementioned additional conditions, ggeneral and standard conditions whichinter-alia include raising of compensatory afforestation (CA), imposition of Net Present Value (NPV) to reduce the adverse impact, minimum tree felling, arrangement of alternate fuels, afforestation measures in the blanks within the forest area, phase wise mining operations, management of safety zone, reclamation of quarry, conservation of topsoil, preparation and implementation of Catchment Area Treatment Plan, Muck Disposal Plan, maintenance of prescribed Right of Way (RoW), plantation of dwarf species are also stipulated in the approvals granted by the Central Government.
Further, in case a proposal involves diversion of forest land located within a Protected Area notified in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, approval of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) is required to be obtained by the concerned user agency before grant of approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and conditions recommended by the NBWL are required to be complied with by the concerned user agency. Further, projects falling in the important tiger habitats are also examined by the National Tiger Conservation Authority to ensure protection and conservation of the tiger habitats.

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